

City & County
of Honolulu



MO'OLELO PĀKA (PARK STORY)

Quarterly newsletter from the City and County of
Honolulu Department of Parks and Recreation

July through September 2020

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Message from Director

As we continue to battle this global pandemic, I sincerely hope that you all are staying happy & healthy.

A big mahalo to all of the DPR staff who continue to work hard through the pandemic. Just as progress was being made against the virus and the return to more normal circumstances was becoming a reality, our island began to experience a second and more significant surge of COVID-19 cases and deaths. This resulted in the need to reinstate park closures and the Stay at Home Order; measures similar to what was implemented in mid-March. This time around we are more accustomed to what needs to be done. It is now simply a matter of getting it done. That means everyone taking responsibility for their actions: wearing face masks, not gathering in large groups, and washing hands frequently. Now there is a new action to add to that list...getting tested. We are fortunate to finally have federal support towards a broad effort to test our population and determine where this virus is having the worst impact. I urge everyone to take advantage of this free testing opportunity, which is available island-wide through mid-September. Visit www.doIneedaCOVID19test.com to find out when and where the testing is being conducted, and to register ahead of time. Please be safe, take care of each other, and we hope to see you in our parks once they reopen.

Mahalo to our outstanding employees!



Brian Mizoshiri

Gerald Nikki Manaois

Edison Yoro

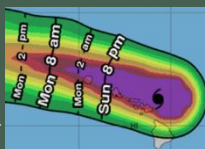
Helping to Study Nature

The [2nd Annual Hanauma Bay Carrying Capacity Study](#) reported improved conditions at the nature preserve during the pandemic closure, including clearer water & larger marine life present. At Bellows, the [military reported hatchings of sea turtles](#) during unprecedented nesting events.



Staffing Hurricane Shelters

With the pandemic straining the number of Red Cross shelter volunteers, the City and DPR quickly trained and activated dozens of our staff to work and operate these shelters ahead of Hurricane Douglas. In particular, [DPR employees managed four of the nine shelters](#) as the storm threatened our islands.



Addressing Beach Erosion

Three different projects on separate shores aim to address the impacts of beach erosion in unique ways: [sand pushing at Sunset Beach](#), a [sand mattress at Punalu'u Beach Park](#), and [rock revetment replacement at Mauna Lahilahi](#).



WORKING HARD DURING THE PANDEMIC

Securing Park Facilities

As part of security improvements for Waikīkī, [security doors were installed at four pavilions along Kūhiō Beach Park](#). The installation took about a month, and will help to secure the public areas during closure hours.



Park Improvements Continue

With the limited use and closure of park facilities, DPR staff and contractors have continued to use the opportunity to repair park facilities. This includes projects at the [Waiau District Park recreation building](#) and parking lots at [Kapi'olani Park](#) and [Kewalo Basin Park](#).



Supporting COVID Testing, Elections, & Food Distributions

The ongoing pandemic has continued the need for open areas to conduct [COVID testing](#), [food distributions](#), and [collect ballots for two elections](#). DPR has provided the space and facilities to support these efforts as they appear.



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Mahalo for a successful & safe Summer Fun!

Following a complete pandemic reconfiguration of our most popular program, the heavily modified Summer Fun served nearly 3,700 keiki at 65 sites across the island and only experienced two unrelated COVID-19 cases amongst staff during that time. This was accomplished by creating a safe environment for staff and keiki by: holding online registration, requiring face masks, taking temperatures, keeping keiki in the same small groups, and frequent use of hand sanitizer.



Congratulations to Brandon Au with the Division of Urban Forestry (DUF) for becoming a Registered Consulting Arborist with the American Society of Consulting Arborists! Brandon and his boss, DUF Administrator Stan Oka, are the only two arborists on O'ahu with these credentials. This recognition provides a set of national resources (knowledge, contacts, and tools) that strengthen their consulting abilities while making them even more valuable, credible arborists. "Mahalo to this division and Stan for allowing myself and the other staff to develop our professional status through certifications and experiences that you can't get anywhere else," said Brandon. "It's never an individual accomplishment, as the support needed for this is more than you can achieve alone."

DPR COVID-19 Response Timeline:

Beginning with Mayor Caldwell's Emergency Proclamation on March 4, the City and DPR have issued and relaxed restrictions to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Check out our [previous newsletter for the timeline from March to June](#).

- July 1 – Modified Summer Fun Program begins. Koko Head Shooting Complex resumes regular walk-in operations.
- July 3 – Permitted outdoor team sports games resume in City parks.
- July 13 – Large DPR events for remainder of July & Aug. cancelled including: 80th Nā Hula Festival and Midsummer Night's Glean.
- July 26 – City parks, facilities, & events closed ahead of Hurricane Douglas. Camping suspended and emergency shelters opened.
- Aug. 8 – "Act with Care, Do Not Gather" Order 2020-23 results in the closure of all parks and park facilities (except for the shooting complex, stand-alone comfort stations, and outdoor showers) until Sept. 5. Fall classes offered by DPR also cancelled.
- Aug. 7 – Park closure clarification issued, allowing COVID testing and food distributions to continue during the closures.
- Aug. 9 – Honolulu Police's COVID enforcement hotlines open, receiving more than 300 calls and nearly 80 emails in first 24 hours.
- Aug. 19 – Emergency Order 2020-24 extends park closures until Sept. 17.
- Aug. 26 – Two-week long, island-wide COVID surge testing begins at Kāne'ohe District Park and Leeward Community College.
- Aug. 27 – Stay at Home / Work from Home Order 2020-25 begins, and is initially scheduled to last until Sept. 10.
- Aug. 27 – Koko Head Shooting Complex and in-person Permit Office operations closed during Stay at Home Order.

Kākou for Parks Program Updates:

We have continued this one-of-a-kind program to revitalize our most heavily used park facilities amidst the pandemic. Since 2015, this key Mayor's initiative has resulted in improvements to **175 different parks** across our island, including:



Shigeo Ushiro Mānana Neighborhood Park



Ulehuwa Beach Park (Depot's)



Melemanu Neighborhood Park

112

Lined Pickleball Courts

120

Renovated Comfort Stations

420

Resurfaced Play Courts